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Daily Highlights

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M O N D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

* Security Council to consider ban on supply of arms and related materiel to Burundi, and imposition of travel restrictions against leaders who encourage violence.

* Condemning violence in southern Lebanon, Council extends UNIFIL's mandate until 31 July 1996; welcomes plans for streamlining Force.

* Council extends UNOMIL mandate till 31 May; says international support depends on parties enduring commitment to peace process.

* Talks between United Nations and Iraq on partial lifting of sanctions on oil sales to begin 6 February in New York.

* Secretary-General condemns overthrow of Government in Niger and arrest of its leaders.

* Right conditions exist for United Nations to launch new round of Guatemalan peace negotiations, according to Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

* FAO warns of continuing food problems in Africa, despite recent good harvests; 1995 food aid shipments lowest in 20 years.

* UNDCP, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile and Peru launch training programme to strengthen drug control expertise.

* United Nations conference recommends wide-ranging administrative reforms for Eastern European countries in transition.

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* Reissued to retract inadvertently included summary on United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). The Security Council is expected to meet on 30 January to consider renewal of the MINURSO mandate.

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The Security Council today declared it would consider banning the supply of all arms and related materiel to Burundi and imposing travel restrictions and other measures against leaders who continued encouraging violence. It asked the Secretary-General to consult with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and concerned Member States on other preventive steps to avoid a deteriorating situation in the country and develop appropriate contingency plans.

In adopting resolution 1040 (1996), the Council welcomed the sending of a technical security team to examine ways to improve security arrangements for United Nations personnel and premises and protect humanitarian operations in Burundi. The Council asked the Secretary-General to keep it informed on the Mission and report by 20 February on the situation and his efforts to facilitate a comprehensive political dialogue, preventive measures and contingency plans. The Council invited Member States and others concerned, to cooperate in the dismantling of radio stations which invited hatred and other acts of violence in the country.

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The Security Council today extended the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) until 31 July 1996. In unanimously adopting resolution 1039 (1996), the Council reiterated its strong support fo r the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized boundaries. It called on all parties to cooperate fully with UNIFIL in the implementation of its mandate.

The Council condemned all acts of violence in the country and urged the parties to end them. It welcomed the streamlining of the Force, to be completed by May as outlined in the Secretary-General's report of 22 January. The Council stressed the need for further savings by rationalizing administration and support services provided they did not affect operational capacity.

In statement after the vote, Council President Sir John Weston (United Kingdom) stressed the urgent need for full implementation of all aspects of resolution 425 (1978). He reiterated the Council's full support for the Taif Agreement and the Lebanese Government's continued efforts to consolidate peace, national unity and security, while successfully carrying out reconstruction. The Council commended the Lebanese Government for successful efforts to extend its authority in the south of the country in cooperation with UNIFIL. The Council also expressed concern over continuing violence in southern Lebanon, regretted the loss of civilian life and urged all parties to exercise restraint.

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In other action today, the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) until 31 May. It called on the Liberian parties to respect and fully implement expeditiously all their agreements and commitments, particularly the Abuja Agreement with regard to the cease-fire, disarmament, demobilization and national reconciliation.

In unanimously adopting resolution 1041 (1996), the Council condemned recent armed attacks against the personnel of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) and demanded they end immediately. The Council also demanded that the Liberian factions strictly respect the status of ECOMOG and UNOMIL personnel, humanitarian organizations, facilitate aid deliveries and abide by the relevant rules of international humanitarian law.

The Council stressed that continued international support, for the peace process in Liberia, including UNOMIL's participation, was contingent on an enduring commitment by the Liberian parties to resolve their differences peacefully and achieve national reconciliation in line with the peace process.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has decided talks with the Iraqi Government on the "oil-for-food" formula will begin on 6 February in New York, a United Nations spokesman said today. The talks are on the implementation of Security Council resolution 986 (1995), which would allow the sale of a limited amount of oil -- up to $2 billion over six months -- in exchange for food and medical supplies. A percentage of the oil revenues would also replenish the United Nations Compensation Committee Fund in Geneva to help workers who have suffered as a result of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

The United Nations delegation will be headed by the Legal Counsel Under Secretary-General Hans Corell, the spokesman said. The Iraqi delegation will be headed by Ambassador Abdul Amir Al-Anbari, formerly Permanent Representative to the United Nations and currently Ambassador to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has firmly condemned the overthrow of the Niger Government, a United Nations spokesman said today. The Secretary-General was dismayed to learn of the arrest the country's leaders, including the Head of State, the Prime Minister and the President of the National Assembly and the subsequent suspension of the national constitution and political parties. He hoped the country would return soon to a normal state, based on the democratic process, the spokesman said.

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The right conditions exist for the United Nations to launch a new round of Guatemalan peace negotiations, according to the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Marrack Goulding. In a statement following weekend talks in Guatemala with Government leaders and in Mexico City with leaders of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG), Mr. Goulding said new Guatemalan President Alvaro Arzu had committed to advancing the peace process as quickly as possible. Similarly, the URNG had confirmed its wish that the peace process be concluded as soon as possible, in accordance with the Framework Agreement of 10 January 1994. They had also publically reiterated their willingness to be flexible, he added.

Mr. Goulding, who was accompanied by the Moderator of the peace negotiations, Jean Arnalt, said the Guatemalan Government had told him of its readiness to explore with the URNG steps to accelerate the conclusion of a permanent peace. While in Guatemala, Mr. Goulding also met with the organizing committee of the "Asamblea de la Sociedad Civil", the leadership of CACIF, and representatives of countries known as the "Friends of the Guatemalan Peace Process" as well as local representatives of United Nations agencies and programmes. He said the presence of the United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights in Guatemala (MINUGUA), was tangible proof that the peace process was producing results and changing things for the better in Guatemala.

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The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), has warned of continuing food shortages for much of Africa in 1996. According to the quarterly special report, issued last week in Nairobi, by the FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System, food aid shipments in 1995 dropped to their lowest level in 20 years. With low stocks in major donor countries and a steep increase in world cereal prices, many of the 44 low-income food deficit countries in Africa would be hard pressed to make up their food needs through imports.

However, urgent food aid was needed to avert a crisis in several east African countries. According to the report, Eritrea, Sudan, Ethiopia had notable needs. Rwanda's requirements were still high and contingencies should be made for possible shortages in Burundi. In Liberia, returning refugees and the internally displaced, were dependent on food aid, and only concerted international action would avert a major food crisis in parts of war-torn Sierra Leone. The FAO has implemented special programmes to improve productivity and production in a number of low-income African countries.

FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf has held talks with African leaders on how to raise the continent's self-sufficiency. He said food needs in sub-Africa in the last two years had dropped because of generally good harvests in 1994 and

high stocks in some countries. However, the continent's cereal production declined by 10 million metric tons in 1995. To ensure Africa's sustainable development, its national resources must be developed and managed more rationally and more productive techniques widely adopted, he said. A world food summit of heads of State and government, is scheduled for November at FAO headquarters in Rome to focus on a plan of action to eliminate hunger and prevent famine

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Argentina, Bolivia, Chile and Peru have launched a training programme to strengthen drug control expertise in South America. The programme, which was designed in collaboration with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), will include courses for police, judges, prosecutors, lawyers and anti-money-laundering agents. It will cover such topics as investigation techniques, precursor control, financial analysis, and data correlation.

The programme, which will be funded jointly by the four countries and the UNDCP, aims to increase significantly drug and precursor seizures within the next two to three years, and strengthen local capacity to combat money laundering. It is the first project established under an agreement signed by the four countries and the UNDCP in April 1994.

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A United Nations meeting has recommended wide-ranging public administration reforms for Central and Eastern European countries in transition. The reforms are in the areas of policy planning and management, legal and institutional changes, civil service reform and training, and resource mobilization and public expenditure management.

The 3-day Conference, which was held in Berlin last week, was sponsored by the Department for Development Support and Management Services, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the German Foundation for International Development. It brought together senior government officials, and public administration experts from Eastern, Central and Western European nations to exchange experiences and formulate proposals for public sector reforms in post-socialist countries.

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